



## WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT FISH & WILDLIFE AND RESEARCH NOTES

No.  944	<b>AUTHOR:</b> W. Adam Phelps, Waterfowl Research Biologist	<b>DATE</b> 10/31/2007
	<b>TITLE:</b> 2007 Mourning Dove Call-Count Survey	

**Abstract:** *The Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife (IDFW) annually participates in the national mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*) call-count survey coordinated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The IDFW has surveyed mourning doves along the same 15 annual survey routes since 1966. The number of mourning doves heard along these routes in 2007 was greater than the previous year. There was no difference in the number of doves seen along the routes during 2007 and 2006. During the most recent 10 year period, there has been no change in the number of mourning doves heard along the Indiana call-count routes.*

### **History**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) established 15 Indiana dove call-count survey routes in 1966. Each route was randomly located on secondary roads and consisted of 20 listening points spaced at one mile intervals. These survey routes are driven by Indiana Division of Fish and Wildlife biologists during late May each year. Surveys begin ½ hour before sunrise, and are not conducted when raining or windy. The number of individual doves heard during a 3-min listening period at each point is recorded. The number of doves seen, whether during the listening period or traveling between points, is also recorded.

### **Results**

In 2007, the number of calling doves heard per survey route was larger than the number heard in 2006. An average of 22.5 doves were heard during the 2007 survey, whereas 19.6 doves were heard per survey route during 2006. There was no difference in the number of doves seen along the routes in 2007 and 2006. The average number of doves heard along Indiana's survey routes has decreased over the last 42 years (Figure 1).

### **Conclusions and Discussion**

US Fish and Wildlife Service researchers (Dolton and Rau 2007) found that numbers of doves heard along Indiana call-count routes have not changed over the last 10 years (1998-2007). Over the long term (1966-2007), the call count survey shows decreasing populations of mourning doves in the states that hunt doves, while dove populations in non-hunting states are stable.

The Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) is a separate survey, conducted annually to monitor numerous bird species. Over the last 10 years (1997 – 2006), there were increases in the number of mourning doves counted during the BBS in Indiana (3.2% per year) and in dove-hunting states (1.4%/year, Dolton and Rau 2007). The BBS showed that dove populations in the non-hunting states during this period were stable (no change). Dolton and Rau (2007) make no effort to explain this discrepancy between survey methods.

### **Literature Cited**

Dolton, DD and RD Rau. 2007. Mourning dove breeding population status, 2007. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Laurel, Maryland, USA.



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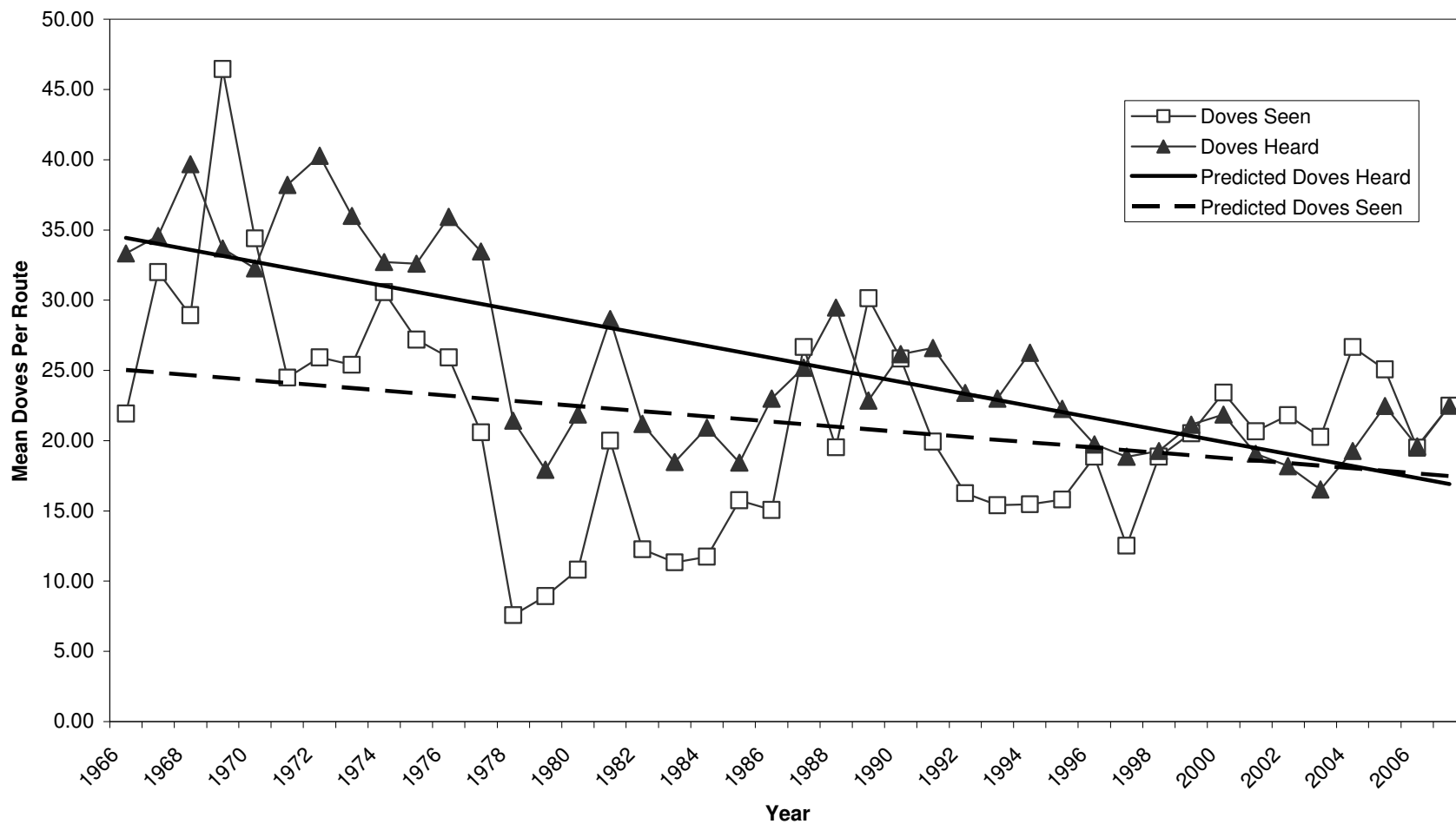


Figure 1. Mean number of mourning doves heard and seen along Indiana's 15 survey routes, 1966-2007.